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➤CONTRIBUTED NOTES.◀

The Native Language of Abraham.—It would be reasonable to infer that the native language of Abraham was Aramaic, since he emigrated from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan (Gen. xi. 31). Moreover, in Deut. xxvi. 5, where directions are given for the offering of the first-fruits, reference is made to Abraham as the Syrian. Also the word Hebrew, which is applied first to Abraham (Abram), Gen. xiv. 13, points in the same direction. *Hebrew* means the one from *beyond*, i. e., beyond the Euphrates. It is a patronymic from עֵבֶר *the country beyond*, עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר *the country beyond the river*. The appellative would then mean *the one who comes from beyond* (the river). It is so translated in the Septuagint ὁ περάτης. The conclusive argument, however, is to be taken from Gen. xxxi., according to which Jacob and Laban made a heap of stones, commemorative of their covenant. Jacob gave it a Hebrew name, Galeed, גִּלְעָד, *heap of witness*, but Laban called it Jegarshahadutha יְגַרְשָׁהדוּתָא, which has the same meaning as Galeed. This compound Jegarshahadutha is Aramaic. The only reason why Laban would use Aramaic, would be because it was his own language and that of the country in which he lived.

The grandfather of Laban was Nahor, and of Jacob, Abraham. Nahor and Abraham were brothers, the sons of Terah, Gen. xi. 27. When Terah went out from Ur, he took with him Abram and his grandson Lot, whose father, Haran, had died. He left behind Nahor, his second son, the father of Bethuel and grandfather of Laban. Those that remained in their own country would not change their language, and since Laban spoke Aramaic that must have been originally the language of Terah and his family. It is probable that Abraham knew Hebrew before he came into the land of Canaan, for there is no indication that he had any difficulty in conversing with its inhabitants.

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Two Corrections.—I have to make two corrections in my article in the July number of *HEBRAICA*, to which Professor Nöldeke has kindly called my attention. On page 250, line 4, حَصَب is the Greek ἐδόξα *he was of opinion*. For حَصَب = δόξα, see Hoffmann "De Hermeneuticis apud Syros Aristoteleis," p. 211, 24. We have the same use of the word in حَصَب زَيْ = ὁρθόδοξος. Wright, "Catalogue of Syriac MSS.," p. 494a, 599, l. 5.; Frothingham, "Stephen bar Sudaili," p. 59. Bar 'Alī, No. 1546. Knös "Chrestomathia," p. 7, 8, etc.

Professor Nöldeke also thinks it probable that Bar 'Ebhryâ has made Thales to be his own countryman, as البطي ("Hist. Dynast.," p. 50) can also be the Nisba of مَلَطِيَّة = Μελετινή ("Yâkût," s. v.). In this way the two texts would agree.

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